

“Phonics/Word Recognition”

CTGE 5534

Beginning Reading and Writing
in Inclusive Classrooms

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The Alphabet and the Alphabetic Principle

- A definition of “Alphabet” – The symbols or “code” in a writing system where each symbol (grapheme) represents a particular speech sound (phoneme) of a spoken/oral language (Moats, 2000).
- A definition of the “Alphabetic Principle” – “The principle that there is a one-to-one correspondence between phonemes (or sounds) and graphemes (or letters); letters represent sounds” (Cecil, 2011, p. 413).

Instruction – Alphabet

- Goal – Recognition - Accuracy and Speed (Automaticity/Memorization)
- What comes first? Names? Sounds? How about a combination approach?
- What about uppercase (capital) versus lowercase letters?
- Decide on a sequence for instruction.
- Use keywords/pictures (mnemonic) when introducing sound-spelling relationships (letter name/keyword/sound, pictures – disassociated/embedded).
- Use different visuals.
- Use songs as well as text (poetry, alphabet books, picture books, etc.).
- Teach the shapes of the letters along with their similarities and differences.
- Provide letter-writing practice.
- Use memory devices in letter-writing instruction.
- Use copying and tracing appropriately.
- Include multisensory activities.
- Teach directly through modeling and then provide practice, guided and then independent. Use activities, games, songs, centers, etc. whenever possible.

Alphabetic Knowledge →
Word Recognition

Orthography

- Recall our class on “language” (Week Four)...
- Definition: “A Writing System” (Moats, 2000, p. 233), also called a “script”...
- Some Descriptors
 - Shallow/Transparent
 - Deep/Opaque
 - Regularity
 - Consistency
- Examples in English

Characteristics of English Orthography

- Approximately 50% of English words are regular.
- Another 37% have only one sound that is represented irregularly (e.g., *could*).
- The remaining 13% must be memorized as sight words (e.g., *ocean*).
- Varying statistics...

Back to Week Two for Context

What approaches are there for the instruction of early reading?

- Phonics Instruction and the Transmission Model
- Holistic Instruction and the Transactional Model
- Comprehensive/Balanced Literacy approach

Word Recognition within Holistic Instruction

- Some strategies that children are taught/use for dealing with an unfamiliar word...
 - Skip it
 - Ask someone
 - Guess
 - Apply any known phonics rules
 - Sound out the first letter and guess the rest
 - Try to figure out the word from its context (pictures and/or text)
- Some approaches to word instruction...
 - Analytic – A word is first identified (phonics-in-context) and then letter-sound relationships are analyzed.
 - Embedded – Letters and words are studied within the context of authentic reading and writing (phonics-through-spelling).
- What issues might arise from this kind of approach?

Word Recognition within Phonics Instruction

- A definition of “Phonics” – “Instruction in the association of speech sounds with printed symbols” (Cecil, 2011, p. 418)
- A definition of “Decoding” – “The translation of written words into verbal speech for oral reading or mental speech for silent reading” (Cecil, 2011, p. 414)
- Question – Why teach phonics and decoding?
 - Helps children associate letters with sounds
 - Teaches beginning readers that printed letters/letter combinations represent speech sounds heard in words
 - Helps children learn to decode words so they can go on to more interesting, enjoyable reading
 - Helps to counteract the “Matthew Effect” (Stanovich as cited in Cecil, 2011)
 - Children who fall behind in first-grade reading have a small chance of ever catching up to grade level.
 - Skilled decoders get better through practice, while poor decoders lag behind.
- What makes this approach a better option than just holistic instruction?

How Readers Read Unfamiliar Words

- Letter/Sound Correspondence (Sublexical) Knowledge → Sound out or blend together each letter sound in a word
- Knowledge of Onsets/Rimes → Identification and blending of known chunks
- Knowledge of Familiar (“Sight”) Words (“Lexical” Knowledge) → Analogizing from the unfamiliar word to the familiar one and using other letter/sound information present to fully decode the unfamiliar word
- Knowledge of Context, Language, and Syntax → Using context along with constructed meaning to predict what the unknown word is in the text
- Theory into practice, Set for variability

Reading Familiar Words

Familiar words are words previously learned and already stored in memory. They are more commonly known as sight words because readers know and are able to read them by “sight.” The process of reading familiar words by sight is one involving the formation of a multitude of connections.

- Readers must make a connection between the graphemes or letters in a word to the phonemes or the sounds represented by those letters.
- The overall pronunciation of these particular letter-sound correspondences in the specific pattern for the word in question, along with the word's meaning, is stored together in the reader's memory.
- This information is available to readers for repeated future use once the word is learned and becomes a "sight word.”
- The advantage of reading words from memory, as opposed to using one of the four previously mentioned ways of reading unfamiliar words, is that it provides for a level of automaticity not present with any of the other methods.
- Readers know sight words instantly and that immediate recall helps readers to quickly decode and allows for less cognitive load to be utilized for word recognition and frees cognitive capacity in order to deal more fully with text meaning.

Reading Familiar Words (Continued)

- Familiar words versus “sight words”
- These words are also known as irregular, high-frequency, trick, and snurks.
- Instruction of “sight words”
 - Lists – Dolch, Fry, and others
 - Possible Lesson Sequence (Blevins, 2006)
 - State aloud the word and use it in a sentence.
 - Write the sentence on the board. Underline the word as you reread the sentence.
 - Discuss the word and any special features that it contains.
 - Have students spell aloud the word as you point to each letter.
 - Then have children write the word in the air.
 - Have children spell aloud the word again as they write it on a piece of paper.
 - Finally, write and display the word on the word wall.
 - For other lesson sequences, see *Foundations*, *Month-by-Month Phonics*, *Phonics They Use*, *Words Their Way*, *Phonics and Word Study Lessons*, *Word Matters* or seek out other resources.

Various Approaches for Phonics Instruction

- Synthetic – Children are taught to use their knowledge of letter/sound correspondences (onsets and rimes as well) to sound out and blend. (Recommended – Systematic and Explicit)
- Analogy-based – Children are taught to use parts of written words they already know to identify new words.
- Special note about onsets/rimes
 - Rime = Word Family = Phonogram
 - Caution: “Beginning readers who rely primarily on phonograms to decode by analogy are less skilled at word identification than beginning readers who analyze words fully” (Blevins, 2006, p. 160).

Lessons...

- Curricular Scope and Sequence – Think about what we have done so far during our linguistic knowledge/language structure work.
- Possible Whole Class Lesson Sequence
 - Review previously learned letter-sounds
 - Develop Phonemic Awareness/Blend Phonemes for a particular letter/sound/pattern
 - Connect Sounds to Letters
 - Connect to Spelling and Writing (Segmentation)
- Possible Small Group/Individual Lesson Sequence
 - Review previously learned letter-sounds.
 - Introduce or review a particular letter/sound/pattern.
 - Practice segmenting and blending words containing the letter/sound/pattern.
 - Build those same words with letter cards.
 - Dictate those same words for spelling/writing practice.
 - Display the words on flashcards for reading practice.
 - Practice reading the words and others like them in decodable/controlled text.
 - Practice writing the words during independent writing.

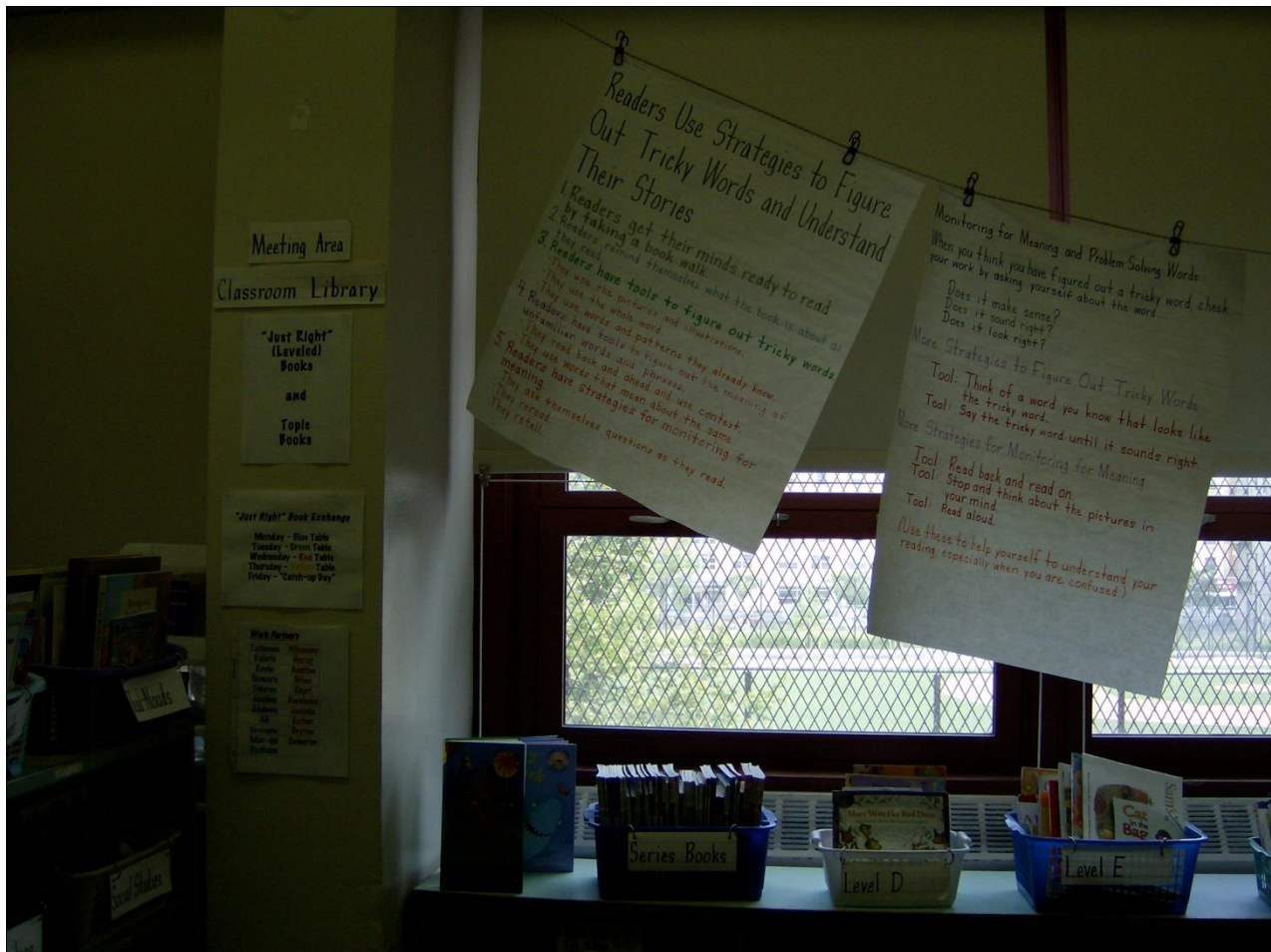
Lessons... (Continued)

- Other activities
 - Word Sort
 - Word Hunt
 - Sentence Dictation/Writing
 - Text Writing
 - Proofreading
 - Echo/Find
 - Games
 - Making Connections
 - Making Words/Word Scramble/Word Ladders
 - Word Bank (Brainstorming)
 - Word of the Day
 - Word Talk
- Use manipulatives and visuals
 - Sound-Spelling Cards
 - Letters
 - Pointers, Wikistix, tokens, stamps, whiteboards, slates, Toobaloos, etc.
 - Charts
 - Word Wall (along with Word Journals/Notebooks)
- Make connections
 - Authentic reading (predictable/patterned texts and authentic [trade] books)
 - Authentic writing
 - Meaning (comprehension)

Other Considerations

- Being a “word detective” – using “word attack” skills...
- Active versus Passive
- Coaching
- Use of other “print strategies”...
- “Rules”...

Print Strategies



Development of Word Reading

- Let's take a step back now from content and pedagogy in order to delve into how this process develops over time...
- Ehri, "Phase Theory of Sight Word Reading"
- Four phases
 - Pre-alphabetic
 - Partial Alphabetic
 - Full Alphabetic
 - Consolidated Alphabetic

Coaching Information Specific to Blending...

Strategies for Blending Sounds to Make Words (Cecil, 2011)

- Make the first sound. Add the second. Put them together and then add the third.
- Make the first sound and add the rime.
- Look at the rime first and put it together backwards.
- Identify the word parts you know.
- Ask yourself: What do I know about this word?
- Ask yourself: Do I know any words that look like this one? Does this word make sense?

More Specifically...

Blending the Word “Sat” – Final versus Successive (Phonic/Visual as opposed to Oral/Auditory) (Blevins, 2006)

- Final Blending
 1. Read each letter name.
 2. Point to the letter *s* and say /s/.
 3. Point to the letter *a* and say /a/.
 4. Slowly slide your finger under the letters *sa* and say /sa/ slowly.
 5. Then quickly slide your finger under the letters *sa* and say /sa/ quickly.
 6. Next, point to the letter *t* and say /t/.
 7. Slowly slide your finger under *sat* and say /sat/ slowly.
 8. Circle the word with your finger and say, “The word is *sat*.”
- Successive Blending
 1. Read each letter name.
 2. Point to the beginning of the word *sat*.
 3. Run your finger under each letter as you extend the sound that each letter stands for. For example, say *ssssaaaat*. Do not pause between sounds. Do not say /s/ (pause) /a/ (pause) /t/. If the first sound is not a continuous sound, quickly blend the first sound with the vowel sound that follows. For example, say *baaaaat*.
 4. Slowly compress the extended word. Therefore, go from *ssssaaaat* to *ssaat* to *sat*.
 5. Circle the word with your finger and say, “The word is *sat*.”

So a holistic or a phonics or a
comprehensive/balanced literacy
approach?

References

- Blevins
- Clark
- Ehri
- Gough and Tunmer, 1986
- Moats, 2000
- Scarborough, 2001
- SEDL, <http://www.sedl.org/reading/framework/overview.html>
- Share